

CLAIMS

Claim 1. A zither, comprising:

- 5           a rigid, hollow, lightweight, non-organic frame, extending around the outer periphery of the instrument to provide a stable support for the strings, unaffected by string tension or humidity, and providing sufficient strength to support double string options; and  
10          an easily removable rear panel to permit interchangeability of panel units as well as the expansion of the sound box.

Claim 2. A zither with increased range, comprising:

- 15          a frame element surrounding a resonance chamber and supporting a plurality of strings; and a chord bar retaining assembly, which is quickly and easily replaced with a second chord bar retaining assembly, having different chord bars, permitting the playing of multiple chords with a  
20          single instrument.

- Claim 3. A chorded zither of superior quality and versatility, wherein the outer profile of the instrument is defined by a continuous band of lightweight metal, such  
25          that when the band is closed at the top and bottom, it forms a sound chamber; said band not being distorted by heat and humidity, forms a stable base for the strings and top and bottom closures.

- 30          Claim 4. A chorded zither of claim 3, wherein the device is capable of supporting double strings.

Claim 5. A chorded zither, as in claim 3, and further including interchangeable top and bottom closures.

Claim 6. A chord bar retaining assembly, as in  
claim 2, and further including a chord bar with an attached  
device, such that when said chord bar is depressed in a  
normal playing mode, said device bridges over the adjacent  
5 chord bar to contact a given string to eliminate said  
string's objectionable-sounding harmonic tone.

Claim 7. A chorded zither, including a frame,  
front and rear panels, wherein the front and rear panels are  
10 quickly and easily replaced since the frame is independently  
strong enough to resist the stresses normally associated  
with the instrument.

Claim 8. A chorded zither as in claim 7, wherein  
15 the frame is strong enough to resist the stress generated by  
double strings.

Claim 9. A chorded zither as in claim 7, wherein  
the volume of the sound chamber may be varied.